

Nebraska Supreme Court

Acceptable Use Policy for Computer and Internet Use

1.0 Standard

1.1 Application and Intent

This policy shall apply to all judicial officers and employees using the State Data Communications Network (SDCN), the Nebraska Supreme Court Network (NSCN), and Removable Media. It is intended to provide minimum standards for acceptable use, including clarification of uses which are consistent or inconsistent with this policy.

All use of the State Data Communications Network and/or the Nebraska Supreme Court Network (such as Internet logs and e-mail) by judicial officers and employees is the property of the State of Nebraska and is subject to applicable Nebraska Supreme Court rules and policies, and State and Federal laws, such as public record laws of the State of Nebraska as applicable. End users should not have any expectations of privacy regarding personal business conducted on the State Data Communications Network and/or the Nebraska Supreme Court Network unless protected by State or Federal law.

Use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN shall be consistent with the goals of:

- Simplifying and disseminating information;
- Encouraging collaborative projects and sharing of resources;
- Aiding technology transfer within and outside the State of Nebraska;
- Fostering innovation and competitiveness within Nebraska;
- Building broader infrastructure in support of the performance of professional work-related activities.

1.2 Acceptable Uses of the SDCN and/or the NSCN:

1. To provide and simplify communications with other state agencies, units of government, and citizens.
2. To communicate and exchange professional development information, including online discussion or debate of issues in a field of knowledge.
3. To exchange communications in conjunction with professional associations, advisory committees, standards activities, or other purposes related to the user's professional capacity.
4. To apply for or administer grants or contracts for work-related applications.
5. To carry out regular administrative communications in direct support of work-related functions.
6. To announce new products or services within the scope of work-related applications.
7. To access databases or files for purposes of work-related reference or research material.
8. To post work-related questions or to share work-related information.

9. To communicate to children, teachers, doctors, day care centers, babysitters, or other family members to inform them of unexpected schedule changes, and for other essential personal business. The use of the State's telecommunications systems for essential personal business shall be kept to a minimum and shall not interfere with the conduct of state business.

1.3 Unacceptable Uses of the SDCN and/or the NSCN:

Unacceptable uses of the SDCN and/or the NSCN subject to remedial action (see Section 1.6), include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Violation of the privacy of other users and their data. For example, users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user.
2. Violation of the legal protection provided by copyright and licensing laws applied to programs and data. It is assumed that information and resources available via the SDCN and/or the NSCN are private to those individuals and organizations owning or holding rights to such information and resources, unless specifically stated otherwise by the owners or holders, or unless such information and resources clearly fall within the statutory definition of a public record. It is unacceptable for an individual to use the SDCN and/or the NSCN to gain access to information or resources not considered a public record without the granting of permission to do so by the owners or holders of rights to such information or resources.
3. Downloading or installation of unauthorized software or hardware in violation of license agreements.
4. Violation of the integrity of computing systems. For example, users shall not intentionally develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage or alter the software components of a computer or computing system.
5. Use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN for fund-raising or public relations activities unrelated to an individual's employment with the Nebraska Supreme Court.
6. Use inconsistent with laws, Nebraska Supreme Court rules and policies, regulations, or accepted community standards. Transmission of material in violation of any local, state, or federal law or regulation is prohibited. It is not acceptable to transmit or knowingly receive threatening, obscene, or harassing material.
7. Malicious or disruptive use, including use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN or any attached network in a manner that precludes or significantly hampers its use by others. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer worms or viruses, and use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN to make unauthorized entry to any other machine accessible via the network.

8. Unsolicited advertising, except for announcement of new products or services as described in item No. 6 under “Acceptable Uses.”
9. Use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN for recreational games.
10. Use in conjunction with for-profit activities, unless such activities are stated as a specific acceptable use.
11. Use for private or personal business ventures such as second sources of income, other family member personal business interests, et cetera.
12. Misrepresentation of one’s self, the Nebraska Supreme Court, or the State of Nebraska when using the SDCN and/or the NSCN.
13. Contacting senators, lobbyists, and coworkers regarding legislative matters, unless requested as part of a unified strategy to do so. Communication via SDCN and/or NSCN to contact senators or lobbyists regarding personal issues or the advancement of legislation for the sole benefit of a specific employee group (e.g., salary bills, retirement benefits) and not the court as a whole.

1.4 Acceptable Uses of Removable Media (*applicable only to users of the NSCN – employees or officers of the appellate courts and administrative employees*)

In order to prevent damage, compromise, or loss of data, the following mandatory restrictions will apply to the use of all removable media:

1. Only Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased and managed removable media shall be used within the NSCN. No personal, non-Nebraska Supreme Court, or other unauthorized removable media may be used within the NSCN system.
2. It is not permissible to use Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased media on personal computers or other devices that do not have an official connection to the NSCN unless authorized by the Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services.
3. Removable media should only be used to transport or store data when other more secure means, for example, NSCN e-mail system or network-shared folders, are not available.
4. Removable media will only be used to store or transport data for such purposes of direct support of work-related functions, work-related reference, and/or research material.
5. All removable media is to be afforded the same level of physical protection as the most sensitive material stored thereon. All removable media should be stored in a safe, secure environment at all times. Users will ensure that all removable media checked out to them will be secured discretely, carried in a closed container, and not in public view where it can attract attention.
6. “On-Access” anti-virus and authorization scanner controls will be configured on all servers and workstations attached to the NSCN to check for removable media devices. Rather than scanning whole systems, on-access scanners will scan files and other removable media and their associated drives when they are accessed. Access is not allowed to such objects until the scanner has verified the device is authorized and virus free.

7. When transferring data from outside of the NSCN, extreme caution must be taken, as the potential impact of malicious software attacks on the NSCN system could be severe. All data is to be scanned by the on-access scanner prior to transfer.
8. Any loss or theft of any item of removable media must be reported immediately to the Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services so that the level of compromise can be assessed and necessary efforts can be made for recovery.
9. If any item of removable media is no longer required, it must be destroyed by approved secure means. This is only to be carried out by the Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services.

1.5 Unacceptable Uses of Removable Media (*applicable only to users of the NSCN – employees or officers of the appellate courts and administrative employees*)

Unacceptable uses of Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased removable media to store and/or move data, subject to remedial action (see section 1.6), include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Violation of the privacy of others and their data. For example, users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user.
2. Violation of the legal protection provided by copyright and licensing laws applied to programs and data. It is assumed that information and resources available via the NSCN are private to those individuals and organizations owning or holding rights to such information and resources, unless specifically stated otherwise by the owners or holders, or unless such information and resources clearly fall within the statutory definition of public record. It is unacceptable for an individual to use the NSCN to gain access to information or resources not considered a public record without the granting of permission to do so by the owners or holders of rights to such information or resources.
3. Downloading of software in violation of license agreements.
4. Violation of the integrity of computing systems. For example, users shall not intentionally develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage or alter the software or hardware components of a computer or computing system.
5. Storing or moving of data for fund-raising or public relations activities unrelated to an individual's employment with the Nebraska Supreme Court, unsolicited advertising, for-profit activities, or use in private or personal business ventures such as second sources of income or other family member business interests, etc.
6. Use inconsistent with laws, regulations, or accepted community standards. Transmission of material in violation of any local, state, or federal law or regulation is prohibited. It is not acceptable to transmit or knowingly receive threatening, obscene, or harassing material.

7. Malicious or disruptive use in a manner that precludes or significantly hampers its use by others. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, destruction of stored data or physical destruction of the removable media device, propagation of computer worms or viruses, and the use of any removable media device to make unauthorized entry to any other machine owned or leased by the Nebraska Supreme Court or the State of Nebraska.
8. Use of Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased removable media devices for recreational games.
9. Misrepresentation of one's self, the Nebraska Supreme Court, or the State of Nebraska.

1.6 Remedial Action

Routine monitoring of usage will not occur. However, in the event of reported or suspected unacceptable use in violation of this policy, the Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court may authorize the Deputy State Court Administrator for Information Technology to request monitoring of usage by a person subject to this policy, including Internet access and e-mail transmission, to be conducted by State of Nebraska Information Management Services (IMS) or an applicable service provider.

Remedial action may include disciplinary proceedings against the individual or individuals responsible for the violation of this policy, including termination of employment or reporting to the appropriate disciplinary authority. If, in the judgment of the Chief Justice, it is believed that criminal activity has taken place within the SDCN and/or the NSCN infrastructure, the Chief Justice will notify the proper authorities and will assist in any investigation of any offense.

The Nebraska Supreme Court accepts no responsibility for traffic which violates the acceptable use policy of any other networks connected, either directly or indirectly, to the SDCN and/or the NSCN. If the owner of any network connected to the SDCN and/or the NSCN notifies the Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services of a violation of its acceptable use policy, the Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services shall inform the agency, board, commission, or affiliate organization within which such violation occurred. It shall be the responsibility of the agency, board, commission, or affiliate organization to take appropriate remedial action and notify the owner of the connected network.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Nebraska Supreme Court Network (NSCN)

NSCN shall mean any data communications facility or equipment contracted for or provided by the Nebraska Supreme Court, Nebraska Court of Appeals, or the Administrative Offices of the Courts/Probation, including State provided Internet access and network connections to Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased equipment.

The purpose of the NSCN is to provide a vehicle that allows data communications to occur among officers and employees of the appellate courts and administrative employees. Use of the NSCN is subject to the policies and standards contained in this document.

2.2 State Data Communications Network (SDCN)

State Data Communications Network (SDCN) shall mean any data communications facility or equipment contracted for or provided by the State of Nebraska, including State provided Internet access and network connections to Nebraska Supreme Court owned or leased equipment.

The purpose of the SDCN is to provide a vehicle that allows data communications to occur between agencies and across interstate and intrastate boundaries. Use of the SDCN is subject to the policies and standards contained in this document.

2.3 Removable Media (*applicable to users of the NSCN only – employees or officers of the appellate courts and administrative employees*)

Removable media is defined as but not limited to the following: floppy disks, compact disks (CD's), Digital Video Disks (DVD's), jump drives, flash drives, portable hard drives, Firewire connected devices, Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's), and Universal Serial Bus (USB) connected devices.

3.0 Applicability

This policy shall apply to all judicial officers and employees using the SDCN and/or the NSCN.

4.0 Responsibility

The Nebraska Supreme Court's Information Technology Services is responsible for administration of the courts' use of the SDCN and/or the NSCN and for ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Individual supervisors are responsible for the activity of their employees and for ensuring that each employee is familiar with this Nebraska Supreme Court Acceptable Use Policy for Computer and Internet Use and that failure to comply with this policy may constitute grounds for disciplinary actions (see Section 1.6).

This policy applies to all judicial officers and employees using the SDCN and/or the NSCN or any other networks accessed through an SDCN and/or an NSCN connection, including the Internet. Compliance with this policy and the acceptable use policies of any other networks accessed through the SDCN and/or the NSCN connection is also subject to enforcement by the owner of that network.

Should a violation of this policy occur, the individual who committed the violation shall be personally liable for his or her actions. Lack of knowledge of or familiarity with this policy shall not release an individual from such liability.